IPCC Special Report

Carbon Dioxide Capture and Storage

Summary for Policymakers

A Special Report of Working Group III of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

This summary, approved in detail at the Eighth Session of IPCC Working Group III (Montreal, Canada, 22-24 September 2005), represents the formally agreed statement of the IPCC concerning current understanding of carbon dioxide capture and storage.

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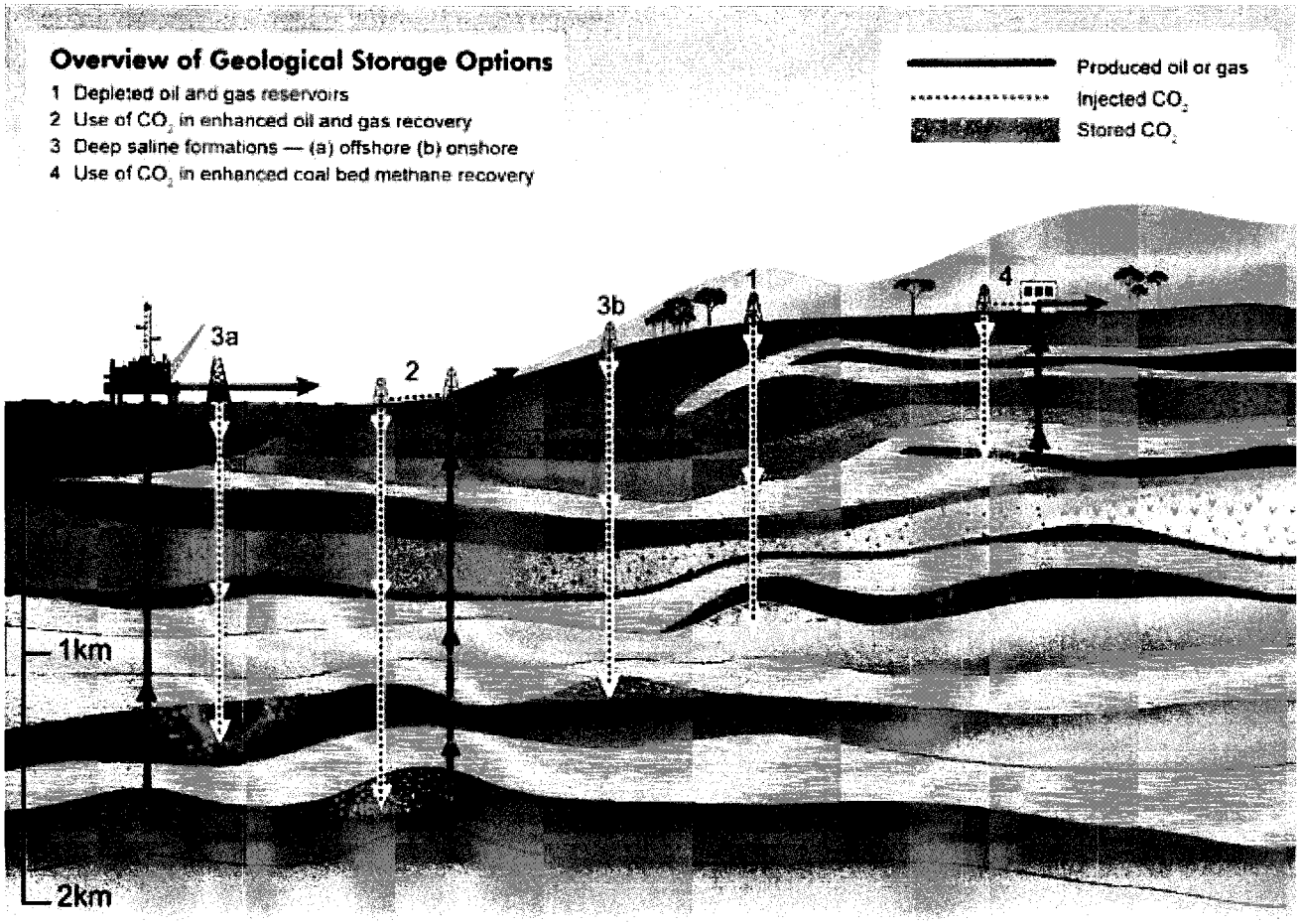

Figure SPM.4. Overview of geological storage options (based on Figure 5.3) (Courtesy CO2CRC).

resistant material. Shipping of CO_2, analogous to shipping of liquefied petroleum gases, is economically feasible under specific conditions but is currently carried out on a small scale due to limited demand. CO_2 can also be carried by rail and road tankers, but it is unlikely that these could be attractive options for large-scale CO_2 transportation (Sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.2, Figure 4.5, 4.6).

7. *Storage of CO_2 in deep, onshore or offshore geological formations uses many of the same technologies that have been developed by the oil and gas industry and has been proven to be economically feasible under specific conditions for oil and gas fields and saline formations, but not yet for storage in unminable coal beds[8] (see Figure SPM.4).*

If CO_2 is injected into suitable saline formations or oil or gas fields, at depths below 800 m[9], various physical and geochemical trapping mechanisms would prevent it from migrating to the surface. In general, an essential physical trapping mechanism is the presence of a caprock[10]. Coal bed storage may take place at shallower depths and relies on the adsorption of CO_2 on the coal, but the technical feasibility largely depends on the permeability of the coal bed. The combination of CO_2 storage with Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR[11]) or, potentially, Enhanced Coal Bed Methane recovery (ECBM) could lead to additional revenues from the oil or gas recovery. Well-drilling technology, injection technology, computer simulation of storage reservoir performance and monitoring methods from existing applications are being

[8] A coal bed that is unlikely to ever be mined – because it is too deep or too thin – may be potentially used for CO_2 storage. If subsequently mined, the stored CO_2 would be released. Enhanced Coal Bed Methane (ECBM) recovery could potentially increase methane production from coals while simultaneously storing CO_2. The produced methane would be used and not released to the atmosphere (Section 5.3.4).

[9] At depths below 800–1,000 m, CO_2 becomes supercritical and has a liquid-like density (about 500–800 kg m^{-3}) that provides the potential for efficient utilization of underground storage space and improves storage security (Section 5.1.1).

[10] Rock of very low permeability that acts as an upper seal to prevent fluid flow out of a reservoir.

[11] For the purposes of this report, EOR means CO_2-driven Enhanced Oil Recovery.